

Mangbetu language

Mangbetu, or *Nemangbetu*, is one of the most populous of the Central Sudanic languages. It is spoken by the Mangbetu people of northeastern Congo. It, or its speakers, are also known as *Amangbetu*, *Kingbetu*, *Mambetto*. The most populous dialect, and the one most widely understood, is called Medje. Others are Aberu (Nabulu), Makere, Malele, Popoi (Mapopoi). The most divergent is Lombi; *Ethnologue* treats it as a distinct language. About half of the population speaks Bangala, a trade language similar to Lingala, and in southern areas some speak Swahili.

The Mangbetu live in association with the Asua Pygmies, and their languages are closely related.

Contents

Dialects

Phonology

Vowels

Consonants

Other Features

References

Dialects

Mangbetu dialects and locations as listed by Demolin (1992):^[4]

- *Mangbetu proper* is spoken north of Isiro, in the subregion of Haut-Uele and north of the Bomokandi River. It is found in Nangazizi and Rungu in the collectivité of Azanga, Ganga in the collectivité of Okondo, Tapili in the collectivité of Mangbetu, Medanoma in the collectivité of Mangbele, in Ndei collectivité north of Isiro, and in Mboli collectivité near Goa.
- *Medje* (*Mɛdʒɛ*) is spoken south of Isiro, around Medje in Mongomassi and Medje collectivités, and also in the ethnic Mangbetu collectivités of Azanga and Ndei.
- *Makere* is spoken around Zobia in the subregion of Bas-Uele.
- *Malele* is spoken in Poko Territory^[5] - in the areas of Balele, Niapu, and Kisanga.
- *Mapopoi* is spoken in Panga and the Aruwimi River.
- *Nabulu* is spoken in Bafwasamoa, 15 km north of Nia-Nia.
- *Lombi* is spoken in Bafwasende Territory^[5] - in Barumbi around the Opienge River, and in Maiko National Park.

Phonology

Mangbetu	
<i>Nemangbetu</i>	
Region	Congo (DRC)
Ethnicity	Mangbetu people
Native speakers	(660,000 cited 1985–1993) ^[1]
Language family	Nilo-Saharan? <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Central Sudanic<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Eastern<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Mangbetu–Asoa<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Mangbetu
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	Either: <div>mdj – Mangbetu</div> <div>lmi – Lombi</div>
Glottolog	mang1394 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/mang1394) Mangbetu ^[2] <div>lomb1254 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/lomb1254) Lombi^[3]</div>

Vowels

	low	low-mid	high-mid	near-high	high
front	a	ɛ	e	ɪ	i
back		ɔ	o	ʊ	u

Consonants

	bilabial	labio-dental	alveolar	post-alveolar	retroflex	palatal	velar	labial-velar	glottal
nasal	m		n				ŋ		
stop	p, b, b̥, m̥b̥		t, d, d̥, nd̥				k, g, ɡ̊, ɲɡ̊	k̟p̟, ɡ̟b̟, ɲ̟m̟ɡ̟b̟	
affricate				tʃ, dʒ					
sibilant			s, z, ɳz						
fricative	ɸ, β	f, v, m̥v̥							h
approximant			l			j	w		
tap		ɸ			ɽ				
trill	ʙ̥, ʙ								

Common allophones occur for /p/ as [pʷ], /b/ as [bʷ], /g/ as [ɡʲ] and /k̟p̟/ as [k̟pʷ].^[6] The language also contains the poorly attested phonemes /ɲɡʲ/, /dɾ/, and /ndɾ/.

Other Features

One unusual feature of Mangbetu is that it has both a voiced and a voiceless bilabial trill as well as a labial flap.^{[7][8]}

- [nóʙ̥ù] "to bring out"
- [nóʙù] "to fan"
- [nóm̥ʙù] "to enclose"
- [nónvò] "to defecate"
- [nóʙvò] "to get fat"

The labial trills are not particularly associated with back vowels or prenasalization, pace their development in some American languages.^[9]

- [éʙ̥ì] "leaping like a leopard"
- [nɛʙàʙá] "kind of plan"

References

1. Mangbetu at *Ethnologue* (<https://www.ethnologue.com/13/>) (13th ed., 1996).
Lombi at *Ethnologue* (<https://www.ethnologue.com/13/>) (13th ed., 1996).
2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Mangbetu" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/mang1394>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
3. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Lombi" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/lomb1254>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
4. Demolin, Didier. 1992. *Le Mangbetu: etude phonétique et phonologique*, 2 vols. Brussels: Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres, Université libre de Bruxelles dissertation.
5. Bokula, Moiso & Agozia-Kario Irumu. 1994. Bibliographie et matériaux lexicaux des langues Moru-Mangbetu (Soudan-Central, Zaïre). *Annales Aequatoria* 10: 203–245.
6. <https://phoible.org/inventories/view/778>
7. Linguist Wins Symbolic Victory for 'Labiodental Flap' (<https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5059863>). NPR (2005-12-17). Retrieved on 2010-12-08.
8. LINGUIST List 8.45: Bilabial trill (<http://www.linguistlist.org/issues/8/8-45.html>). Linguistlist.org. Retrieved on 2010-12-08.
9. Olson & Koogibho (2013) "Labial vibrants in Mangbetu" (http://www.afrikanistik-aegyptologie-online.de/archiv/2013/3851/OlsonMbiri1_PDF.pdf)

Retrieved from "https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Mangbetu_language&oldid=964702250"

This page was last edited on 27 June 2020, at 02:20 (UTC).

Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License; additional terms may apply. By using this site, you agree to the [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the [Wikimedia Foundation, Inc.](#), a non-profit organization.